

# vital news

News from the Maryland Vital Statistics Administration

November 2014

## The Electronic Death Registration System is going live on January 1, 2015



The Vital Statistics Administration of the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene is pleased to announce that the rollout of the Maryland Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS) will begin on January 1, 2015. EDRS is a web-based application that medical certifiers and funeral homes will use to file death records in Maryland, and will replace the current paper-based system.

### What are the advantages of EDRS over the current paper-based system?

The new system will assist users with data entry through automatic fill-in of repetitious data, drop-down pick lists and auto-population of selected fields. There are also built-in help screens and prompts to assist data providers in proper completion of certificates, which will result in fewer errors and improve turnaround time for providing deaths certificates to family members who need certificates quickly for benefit resolution. The availability of an EDRS will also be of enormous benefit for public health purposes since fact-of-death and cause of death information will be available much more quickly than is possible with a paper-based death registration system. In addition, the system will assist in fraud prevention involving death records.

### Will the system be fully implemented on January 1, 2015?

No, there will be a phased rollout of the system beginning on January 1 to register and train the thousands of users who will be using EDRS statewide. The first group of users will begin using EDRS on January 1, and new users will be added throughout the year.

### I am currently involved in completing death certificates. How will I know when I should begin to use EDRS?

You will be notified when your institution/facility should begin using EDRS. Until then, you should continue to submit death certificates to the Division of Vital Records using paper copies.

### What will I need to access EDRS?

You will need a computer with internet connectivity. Users who need to print certificates and/or burial transit permits will also need a printer, and, in some cases, a scanner.

### How will I be trained on the use of EDRS?

There are instructions built into the EDRS system to assist users in completing each data item on the certificate. User

guides on how to access the system and how to complete and save a record will be available on line. There will also be opportunities for in person training, and help desk support will be available during normal business hours.

### Will I need a log on and password to use EDRS?

Yes. EDRS is a secure system, and only authorized users will be permitted to access the system. Each user will be required to complete an EDRS User Agreement, and be authorized by the organization (funeral home/hospital/nursing home/hospice, etc.) with whom the user is associated. Information on accessing the system will be sent to your organization.

### Will I be required to use EDRS?

Once the system is fully implemented, all users will be required to use EDRS. Until then, users will continue to have the option of completing and submitting death certificates on paper copies. However, we encourage all users to use EDRS once their institution becomes active.

### Once I become active on EDRS, when will the system be available?

The system will be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

### I am a funeral director—will I be able to print burial transit permits from my office?

Yes. If a death certificate is completed on-line and contains both the funeral home and certifier information, the funeral director will be able to print a copy of the burial transit permit from his or her office.

### How will amendments be made to death certificates?

Amendments will be made on paper copies and submitted to the Division of Vital Records, just as they are now.

### Where can I get more information on the implementation of EDRS in Maryland?

More information will be posted on <http://dhmh.maryland.gov/vsa/SitePages/Home.aspx> in the coming weeks, so please continue to check back.